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HEADQUARTERS  
2D LOGISTICAL COMMAND (C), U. S. ARMY  
Fort Lee, Virginia

THE ROLE OF THE PENINSULA BASE COMMAND (2D LOGISTICAL COMMAND)  
IN THE CUBAN CRISIS, 1962

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THE ROLE OF THE PENINSULA BASE COMMAND (2D LOGISTICAL COMMAND)  
IN THE CUBAN CRISIS, 1962

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THE ROLE OF THE PENINSULA BASE COMMAND (2D LOGISTICAL COMMAND)  
IN THE CUBAN CRISIS, 1962

I. SUMMARY

The U. S. military response to the worsening American-Cuban relations in October 1962 included activation of Task Force 125, a joint command organized under operational control of the Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic (CINCLANT). The Army element of TF 125 was placed under operational control of the Commanding General, US Continental Army Command (USCOMARC), who was at the same time designated Commander-in-Chief, Army Atlantic (CINCARLANT).

A CINCARLANT logistical agent was needed in Florida to guarantee effective, rapid response to TF 125 administrative and logistical requirements. Consequently, ARLANT ordered activation of the Peninsula Base Command (PBC).<sup>1/</sup> The 2d Logistical Command (C) was designated to organize and operate the new PBC, with headquarters at Opa Locka Air Force Base, a standby installation on the outskirts of Miami, Florida. 2d Logistical Command closed Opa Locka on 26 October 1962 and became operational as PBC on 29 October 1962.

The detailed mission assigned to Peninsula Base Command is recounted in Figure 1.

The Commanding General, PBC, was granted operational control of all US Army administrative and logistical support forces in Florida responsive to TF 125 requirements, with the exception of Signal units.

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1/ USCOMARC General Order 127, dated 29 October 1962 (SECRET).

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Control was exercised by PBC through its Emergency Operations Center (EOC), where point-to-point communications were established with all major subordinate elements, higher headquarters, XVIII Airborne Corps, Third US Army (TUSA), and the Overseas Supply Agency, New Orleans (OSANO).

On 1 December 1962, the CG, TUSA, assumed operational control of all US Army Forces within Florida and demobilization of forces was directed (Operation ROLL-UP). The CG, PBC, was delegated responsibility to effect the orderly and phased withdrawal of forces to home stations; guidance was provided by CINCARLANT and CG, TUSA. Withdrawal began immediately and was 83 per cent complete within ten days. No major problems were encountered. During redeployment, units returning to home stations were required to plan concurrently for possible re-employment in Florida and were required to maintain a readiness posture for such possible re-employment after return to home stations. PBC planning included provision for re-activation of its operations on command. A minimal command and control element remained at Opa Locka; minimum essential communication facilities and personnel remained throughout Florida. All forces except those designated to remain had departed for home stations by 15 December 1962. PBC ceased to exist as a functioning activity on 7 March 1963.

## II. ORGANIZATION

The urgency of the Cuban situation did not permit any last minute and PBC was immediately cast into the role of preparing for operations as a type Field Army Support Command (FASCOM). Notwithstanding the staging forces, PBC's involvement was an extension of the peacetime CONUS administrative support system which suddenly was required to gear for support of combat operations. PBC's immediate task was establishment of an effective internal organization.

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Headquarters, PBC, was formed from the directorate staff of 2d Logistical Command. Technical services were eliminated as separate sections and were absorbed by the Director of Supply, Maintenance and Services and utilized in appropriate functional areas, except for the Signal and Medical Sections which were raised to directorate level, i.e., Director of Communications and Director of Medical Activities (Surgeon). Figure 2.

The major subordinate elements attached to PBC for operational control were nine Army Staging Area Commands (ASACs) located throughout Florida; the 507th Transportation Group (Movement Control); the US Army Transportation Terminal Activity, S. E. Atlantic (USATTA, SEA); and the 68th Medical Group. Figure 3 shows these major elements, with further breakdown naming the location of sub-elements. It also indicates that coordination was effected with TUSA and with the Supply and Maintenance Command (SMC) of the US Army Materiel Command (AMC).

The ASACs were deployed to air bases, one to a base, ranging the length and breadth of Florida. The assigned mission of each was to support deployment of TF 125 forces or supplies and equipment.<sup>2/</sup> Stated succinctly, the mission assignment does not reveal the scope and complexity of the operation. To varying degrees, it included provision of the entire spectrum of logistical and administrative support from quartering to provision of cryptographic facilities, from ordnance support to preventive medicine.

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2/ Support Plan for STRAC OPlan 316-62 (U), HQ TUSA, 24 Oct 62 (SECRET), and STRAC OPlan 316-62 (U), HQ XVIII Airborne Corps, 1 Oct 62 (TOPSEC).

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The 507th Transportation Group (Movement Control) operated at ten different sites within Florida. Its mission was to report and coordinate unit and resupply movements in PBC.

The US Army Transportation Terminal Activity, S. E. Atlantic (USATTA, SEA), was established and staffed at Port Everglades, some 25 miles north of Miami, by personnel of the US Army Transportation Terminal Command, Atlantic. Its mission was to tranship units and equipment from Florida. The Port Everglades facility developed a capability for loading 10,000 passengers and 23,400 long tons of cargo per 24 hours. The terminal complex included two bivouac sites, storage for approximately 7,000 vehicles and necessary rail loading ramps, beaching sites, and associated facilities.

The 68th Medical Group was the largest PBC subordinate element. It included, in addition to Group Headquarters, four field hospitals, one surgical detachment, one orthopedic detachment, one ambulance company, and one medical detachment.

The maximum strength achieved by PBC was augmented by 8,025 individuals in 139 units. Headquarters, PBC, was augmented by 38 officer and 129 EM fillers on TDY. Attached units were augmented by 168 officer, 11 warrant and 570 EM fillers on TDY.

### III. CONTROL

EOC, the facility from which control was effected, was a function of the PBC Director of Plans and Operations (D/P&O) and had around-the-clock representation from each functional area. EOC consisted of ASAC control, movement control, and supply control.

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The control structure is illustrated in Figure 4. Direct communications were available between all agencies.

Initially, TF 125 Army requirements were to be directed to ARLANT, who would determine the action agency. If PBC were the action agency, requirements would be immediately relayed to the EOC. If requirements could not be filled from within PBC resources, the matter would be directed to OSARO. SMC would assist with technical advice. Subsequent to initial stages of the operation and after arrival of the 5th Logistical Command in the Corps objective area, it was anticipated that ARLANT might determine that certain TF 125 requirements should be levied directly upon PBC, rather than through ARLANT. If this was decided, then 5th Logistical Command would levy its requirements directly upon the PBC EOC.

#### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Local administrative and logistical support to all Army troops, excluding TF 125 elements in Florida, was planned in the manner shown in Figure 5.

1. Central Financing and Supply. The TUSA was responsible for providing administrative support and certain logistical support (Class II and IV) to the ASACs. To do this, a central financing and supply agency was established at Fort Benning, Georgia. Each ASAC requisitioned directly from Fort Benning. The local air base commander was responsible to provide Class I supplies from open allotment and Class III and Class IIIA supplies from funds provided to him by PBC; he filled emergency requirements by local procurement. When these requirements could not be met at the local air base, PBC would assist by obtaining supplies either from PBC resources

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or through NMA or AMC. PFC was initially granted funds in the amount of \$123,000 for reallocation to the various AMAs.

2. **Basic Supply Plan.** The basic supply plan for this operation is illustrated in Figure 6. If 123 units deployed with five days supply for the period D to D + 3. From D + 3 to D + 12, all automatic resupply was to be by air from Florida bases in the amounts shown in the figure; this was a ten days supply. The tonnages computed were later found to be excessive. The first ship scheduled to arrive the objective area from Gulf ports, other than Florida ports, was on D + 6. Surface resupply would continue until D + 12. Subsequent to D + 12, normal requisitioning would be in effect.

a. Emergency resupplies were pre-positioned in the PFC base section. Emergency resupply capability was established at Ops Locks for Classes I, III, and V.

b. Additional resupply for Classes I and III was available on call at Atlanta General Depot and Class V at Anniston, Alabama. (It is the opinion of 2d Logistical Command that at least one additional resupply cache should have been established in the Florida area. In this cache, selected Class II and IV spare parts should have been included.)

3. **Medical.** The 2d Logistical Command Surgeon was placed on directorate staff level and given operational control over all medical service activities in Florida.

a. **Medical units.** To accomplish the medical mission, the units shown in Figure 7 were provided. The greatest concentration of medical support was at Ops Locks.

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b. Evacuation and Hospitalization. Two phases were involved in the medical support plan: a pre-staging and staging phase and a post-staging phase. Figure 8 shows the two phases; the general medical mission for each phase, and the method of evacuation and treatment of casualties from the objective area. Casualties were to be collected and evacuated by Tactical Air Command (TAC) to PBC Opa Locka hospital facilities or Air Force base hospitals. Minimal treatment was to be provided here and patients further evacuated to TUSA hospitals. The majority of Army casualties from the objective area were to come to Opa Locka, be held there for a minimum time and then evacuated to COMUS named hospitals by the Military Air Transport Service (MATS). TUSA made two hospital trains available for additional evacuation capability to COMUS hospitals. Some aircraft from the objective area would return to Orlando, where casualties would be treated by the Air Force and evacuated by MATS.

c. Casualty Estimates. The anticipated casualties in Figure 9 give an idea of the magnitude of the post-staging medical support requirement. Total casualty estimates were based on experience factors for World War II and Korea for D-Day, D + 5 and D + 10. Totals were accumulative; figures are for hospital casualties and do not include those killed in action.

#### V. PREPARATION AND TRAINING

In preparation for the PBC mission, the Commanding General 2d Logistical Command, visited XVIII Airborne Corps in late September to coordinate planning and to determine operational concepts. In addition, selected members of the 2d Logistical Command staff visited USCOMARC for similar purposes.

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Training was initiated by PBC at the earliest possible moment after establishment in Florida. A series of "dry-runs" of critical aspects of the operations were held by subordinate elements of PBC under close monitoring by PBC.

ASACs were thoroughly rehearsed in all phases of their missions to insure perfect timing and complete synchronization of operations. Stand-by equipment was strategically spotted so that any hold-up could be immediately corrected. The transportation terminal activity in Port Everglades was rehearsed with the same thoroughness as the ASACs. Of particular value was the training received by terminal personnel in supporting the loading, movement, and off-loading of elements of the 1st Armored Division during the Task Force Charlie operation (see Chronology for 13, 16, 28 and 30 November). This also provided an opportunity to test the capability of the assigned type landing craft to handle the load programmed.

Exercise MEDIC OPA LOCKA (see Chronology for 19 and 20 November) was a full-dress rehearsal of medical evacuation plans. SUN SHADE I (See Chronology for 17 and 22 November) provided a vehicle for testing the ability of the ASACs to support a tactical deployment of troops.

#### VI. PROBLEMS AND CONCLUSIONS

Major problems encountered by PBC during the Cuban crisis are identified and discussed in this section. Other problems of lesser importance are set forth in detail in PBC After Action Report.

1. The commander of the logistical support element (PBC) must have readily available to him all of the support units and facilities which

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constitute the means whereby he is capable of achieving his mission effectively and promptly. In addition, the units and agencies involved must be informed clearly and unmistakably of the relationships that exist between themselves and the other logistical elements including the command element itself. During the period covered by this report a misunderstanding existed at USATTA, SEA, concerning its relationship to PBC and to its usual next higher headquarters (USATTC, Atlantic). This misunderstanding was never resolved, and its importance was not generally appreciated. The logistical element must be responsive to the demands of the supported units. This type of responsiveness to combat requirements cannot be achieved without a common understanding of the command relationships involved and without clear channels and lines of authority among and between all echelons of the logistical organization. The ASACs present an example of transfer of jurisdiction during the operation. Initially, the ASACs were established and controlled by TUSA and were visualized as a temporary operation. When it became apparent that a single logistical executive and coordinator was required to support TF 125 in Florida, PBC was established to fulfill that role. Responsibility for operation of the ASACs was then transferred from TUSA to PBC by CINCARLANT. This transfer of jurisdiction after the ASACs had become operational caused administrative readjustments and command realignments.

2. Responsiveness to command and to supported units is linked in some instances to availability of personnel and equipment. Automatic data processing equipment for many uses, including inventory control, is essential. Effective command communications is also a fundamental need. The signal platoon organic to 2d Logistical Command during the period

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covered by this report was incapable of providing required signal support due to inadequacy of the TOE. The organization established in draft TOE 11-337D appears to provide a communications capability corresponding more realistically to the needs encountered by PBC. The signal equipment authorized throughout the command must be compatible, and there must be sufficient equipment available to insure that subordinate units with identical signal requirements are provided identical signal equipment. To meet PBC's signal requirements, CINCPACFLT attached the 529th Signal Company from Fort Carson, Colorado, to PBC on 27 October 1962. PBC's existing internal signal platoon was used as augmentation for the 529th Signal Company.

3. A number of problems were caused by various limitations in the logistical command TOE. These difficulties were further complicated by the fact that the command was not originally at 85 per cent of deployable strength, which is an absolute requirement. In addition, it must be remembered that enlisted personnel in a logistical command are assigned by MOS to specific duties requiring specialization. The TOE makes no provision for required housekeeping personnel. When 24-hour operation to provide guards, kitchen police, and other housekeeping details. Appropriate augmentation would solve this problem. TOE changes which would make major contributions to capabilities of the command follow:

- a. An aviation section including flight detachment is necessary augmentation to facilitate liaison, control and coordination.
- b. The logistical command staff must include an air delivery specialist who can deal effectively with both airdrop and air-landing operations.

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c. The directorates must be enlarged to provide great planning capabilities.

d. A signal supply and maintenance company (TOE 11-157D) should be made available to any logistical command employed as a base command. This company should have an established base stock and exchange float based upon equipment density. It can then provide direct support to the base complex.

4. Logistical organizations must be carefully tailored to fit the anticipated requirements and thus, to be able to provide balanced responsiveness to the forces provided. For the same reasons, base development planning must be undertaken immediately after plan approval.

5. Load lists and TOEs of all units must be carefully screened to insure that items which are not needed are eliminated. This will reduce transportation requirements and relieve some units of unnecessary burdens.

6. The liaison representatives of the SMC, the OSAGC, the Petroleum Center, and DMS provided valuable assistance. Definite advance arrangements should be made for such representation in any comparable situations in the future. In addition, continuing liaison must be maintained between all agencies and headquarters concerned.

7. In some instances, overclassification of documents required the use of special-handling methods which were not realistically justified by the texts of the documents. In some cases overclassification lead to delayed transmission of the documents. Procedures to insure that overclassification does not occur are of great importance, as are any procedures designed to limit signal traffic to actual essentials.

8. Deployment planning for logistical elements must be consistent with programmed utilization and anticipated support requirements in order to provide continuous and uninterrupted support capability.

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9. The establishment of PBC was accompanied by housekeeping problems the solution of which required diversion of effort from other missions. Basically, the problems resulted from the unsatisfactory condition of facilities existing in Opa Locka AFB. Billets required rehabilitation to become usable, messes were unequipped, communications and transportation facilities did not correspond to needs, and morale-type facilities were unavailable initially.

10. Large numbers of enlisted personnel and many officers (fillers) did not have an appropriate degree of clearance. This compounded the difficulty of receipt, handling and transmission of the large volume of classified communications received and dispatched. Partial amelioration was achieved by the granting by COMARC to CG, PBC, of authority to grant emergency interim Top Secret clearances based on final Secret clearances.

11. ASACs were established initially for a short-term operation. Their staffing, maintenance capability and supply levels were inadequate to the requirements of a mission of the duration of PBC.

12. Several ASACs had available to them initially TC type 8-P, M-127 trailers. These were not compatible with the configuration of the C-130 aircraft with which they were to be utilized. Late in the operation, engineer type, low bed M-127 trailers which are compatible were made available.

13. There was inconsistency in the provisions of the orders under which augmentation personnel were dispatched to PBC and attached units. The greatest inconsistency, and one which had an adverse effect on morale, concerned authorization of per diem. In many instances personnel were authorized maximum per diem payments while others were authorized none.

14. From the training exercise developed by Task Force Charlie and dry-runs, it became apparent that the amount of amphibious lift with

across-the-beach capability was not sufficient to transport the combat elements. This is based on considerations of turn-around, the dearth of unloading sites, and the age and speed of vessels provided.

## VII. GEROPOLOGY

### 22 October

The 2d Logistical Command was alerted to move to Opa Locka AFB, Florida, to support OPlan 316-62. Outload plans were implemented, COMEXs were loaded, personnel were given records checks and final type immunizations. All personnel who were alerted for immediate shipment to Florida were given information only on a need-to-know basis.

An advance party of 5 officers and 6 EM was alerted to be prepared to move to Opa Locka on 23 October. All other personnel of the 2d Logistical Command at Fort Lee were placed on six-hour alert. Continuous 24-hour operation was initiated and maintained. Personnel requisitions were prepared and dispatched to COMARC for action. Lt Col. J. E. Morrison, Jr., Signal Officer, departed Fort Lee under orders from Brig Gen H. G. Davison, Commanding General, 2d Logistical Command, to locate a Command Post at Opa Locka, Florida.

### 23 October

An advance party of 5 officers and 6 EM departed Fort Lee by air for Opa Locka. Commercial messing and billeting facilities were procured for the advance party and arrangements were made for similar facilities at Opa Locka. Some personnel on six-hour alert at Fort Lee were advanced to four-hour alert status. In preparation for the advance party and the main body which was scheduled to arrive at Opa Locka within the next few days, Provost Marshal representatives began contacting local law enforcement agencies and initiated security checks of on-site facilities.

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# PENINSULA BASE COMMAND

## MISSION

- A. PROVIDE NECESSARY LOGISTICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO TF125 AT INSTALLATIONS IN FLORIDA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PLAN AND MOVEMENT SCHEDULE OF STRAC OPLAN 316-62 (REVISED).
- B. RECEIVE, STORE, RIG AND OUTLOAD AS REQUIRED, EMERGENCY SUPPLIES AND AERIAL RESUPPLY.
- C. SUPERVISE AND COORDINATE THE MOVEMENT OF REPLACEMENTS AND MEDICAL EVACUEES.
- D. PERFORM SUCH OTHER TASKS AS MAY BE ASSIGNED BY CG, USCONARC/CINCARLANT.

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Figure 1



# PENINSULA BASE COMMAND

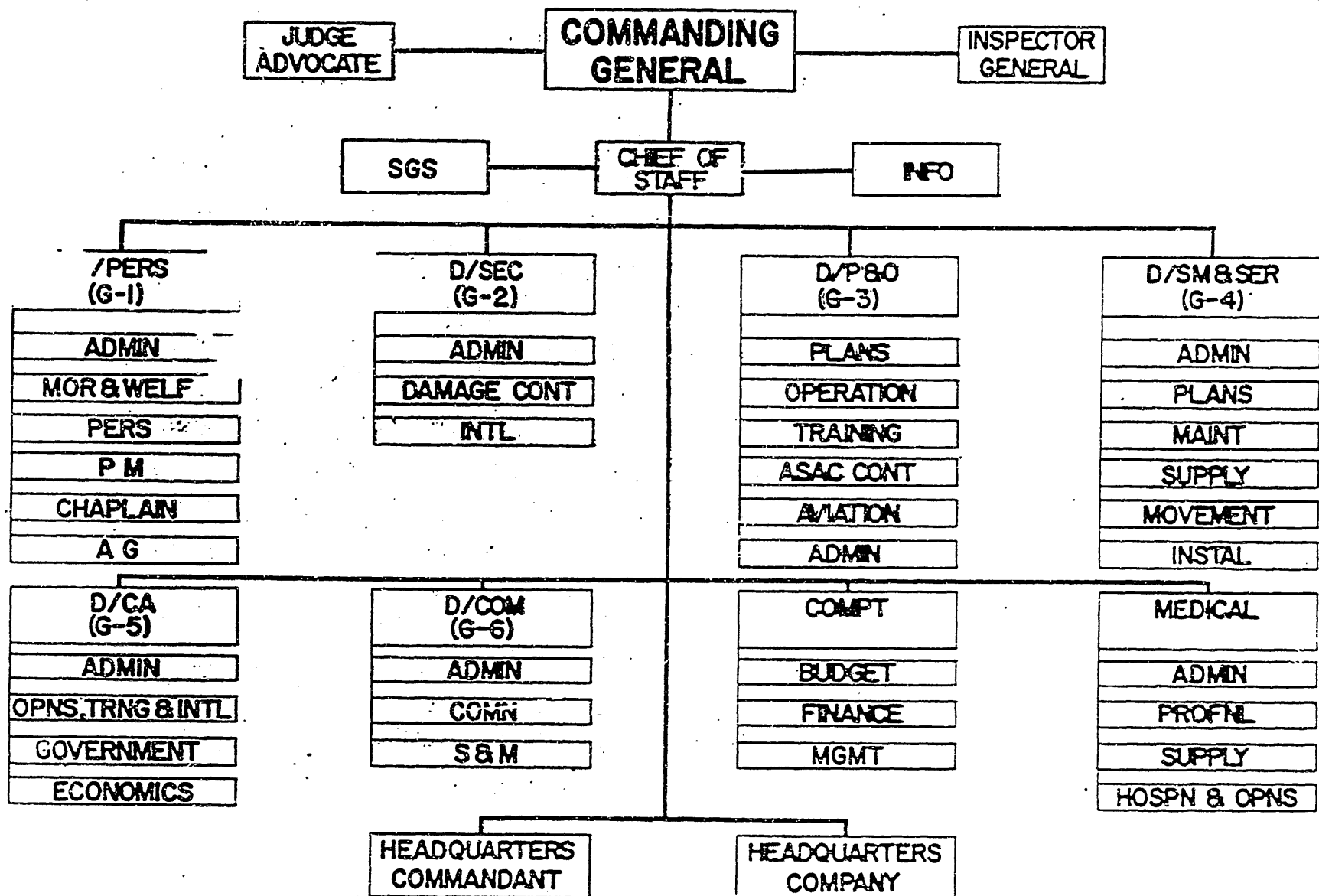
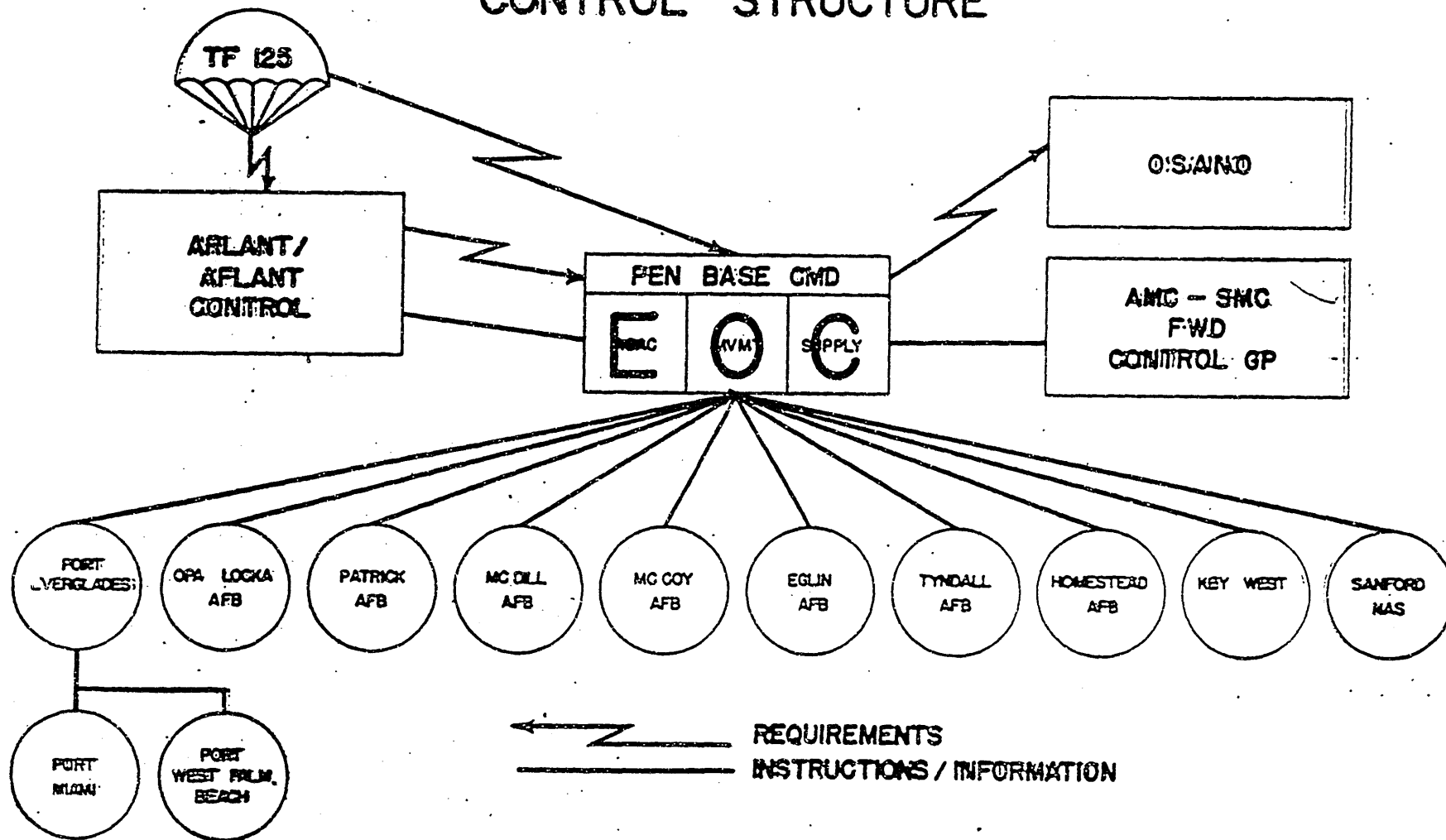


Figure 2

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# SECRET CONTROL STRUCTURE



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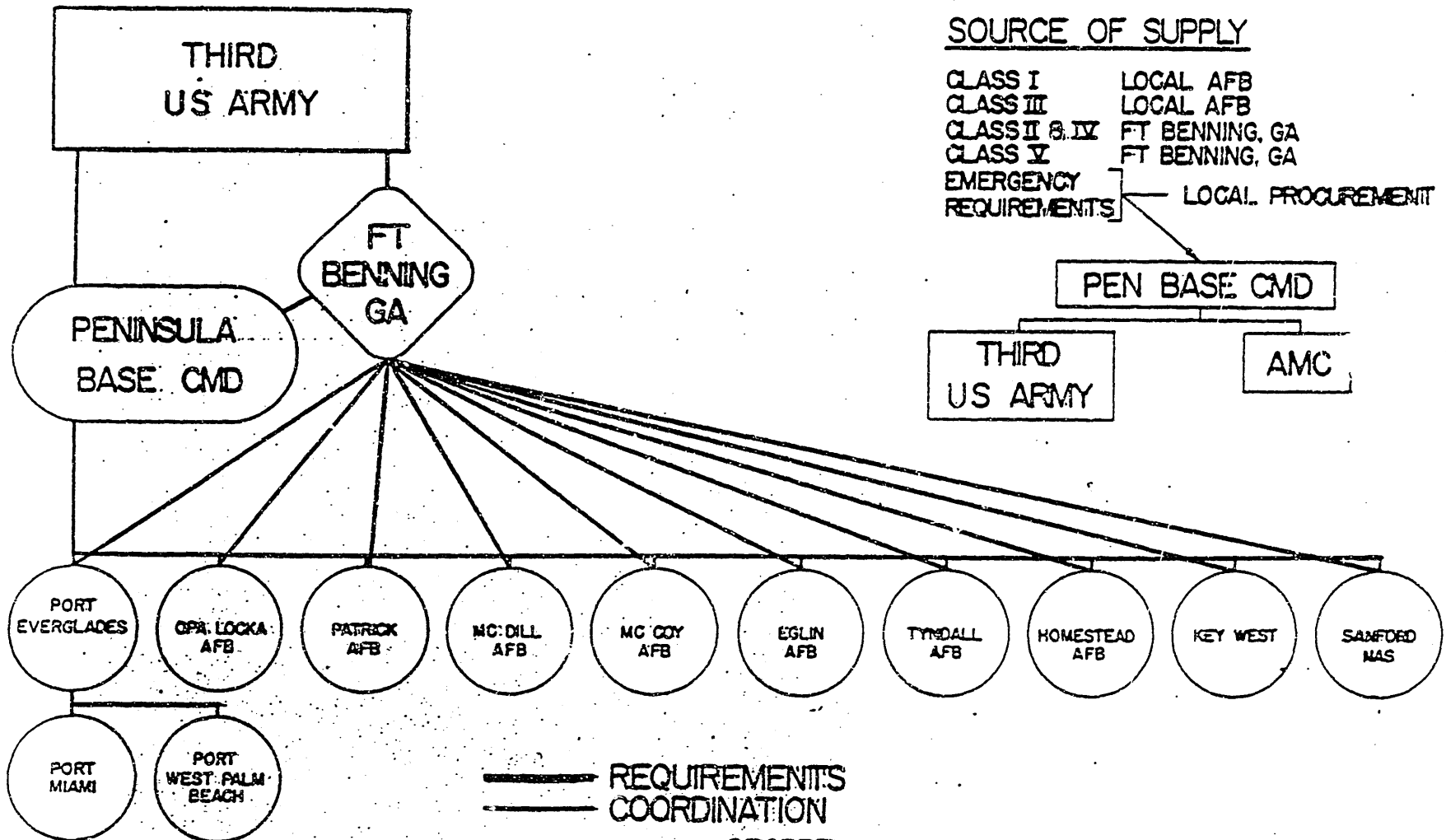
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Figure 4

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## LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE & LOGISTICAL SUPPORT



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Figure 5

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BASIC SUPPLY PLAN

D  $\longleftrightarrow$  D+5  
WITH TROOPS

D+3  $\longleftrightarrow$  D+12

AUTOMATIC AIR FROM FLORIDA  
BASES

APPROX  
10 DAYS  
SUPPLY

CL I SANFORD - 3,000 TONS  
CL III MC COY - 14,000 TONS  
CL V OPA LOCKA - 25,000 TONS

D+8  $\longleftrightarrow$  D+42

AUTOMATIC SURF RESUPPLY, BY-PASS  
FLORIDA FROM GULF PORTS

APPROX  
30 DAYS  
SUPPLY

CL I 27,900 TONS  
CL III 120,000 TONS  
CL V 52,000 TONS

Figure 6

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## PBC MEDICAL UNITS

PBC SURGEONS OFFICE    HQ PBC    OPA LOCKA

68TH MEDICAL GP WITH ATCHD UNITS

3D FIELD HOSP    400 BED    SPLIT TO SUPPORT 5 ASACS (PATRICK,  
MC COY, TYNDALL, EGLIN & SANFORD)

12TH FIELD HOSP    400 BED    OPA LOCKA

15TH FIELD HOSP    400 BED    OPA LOCKA

47TH FIELD HOSP    400 BED    OPA LOCKA

566TH AMB CO SEP    OPA LOCKA

PROV EVAC DET (BUS AMBULANCE)    OPA LOCKA

GEN SURG TEAM    OPA LOCKA

ORTHOPEDIC TEAM    OPA LOCKA

97TH BLOOD LAB    OPA LOCKA

TOTAL MEDICAL STRENGTH 1025

MEDICAL OFF 49

NURSE 48

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Figure 7

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# PBC MEDICAL SUPPORT PLAN

I PRE-STAGING & STAGING PHASES: MEDICAL CARE OF ALL ARMY PERSONNEL IN ASAC'S IN CONJUNCTION WITH U.S.A.F MEDICAL SERVICES

II POST-STAGING PHASE: EVACUATION & HOSPITALIZATION

## OBJECTIVE AREA

U.S.A.F COLLECTS GIVES  
EMERGENCY TREATMENT  
LOADS PLANE EVACS  
TO PBC

## PBC

68TH MED GP OPA LOCKA  
1100 FIELD HOSP BEDS  
250 CIVILIAN BEDS

U.S.A.F ORLANDO  
500 FIELD HOSP BEDS  
A F BASE HOSPITAL

## CONUS NAMED HOSP

THIRD US ARMY  
HOSPITALS

AIR EVAC TAC PLANES

TAC

2 HOSP TRAINS  
AIR EVAC MATS

AIR EVAC MATS

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Figure 8

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## MEDICAL PLAN

## POST-STAGING PHASE

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CASUALTY ESTIMATES:

	D-DAY	D+5	D+10
FROM WEST ZONE	2,400	7,800	10,100
(HAVANA)			
ARMY & MARINES			
FROM EAST ZONE	600	1,280	1,900
(GATMO)			
MARINES			
TOTALS	3,000	9,080	12,000
(ACCUM)			

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Figure 9